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# The Voice of the Phi Sigma -- 1881 -- Volume 04, No. 02

Phi Sigma

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Vol 4 No 2

Nov 29<sup>th</sup> '81



The Voice  
of the  
Phi Sigma.

Vol. IV.

No. 2.

Nov. 29. 1881.

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Editor  
Harry B. Wilson.



— Editorials. —

We are called upon tonight, to fulfill, for the fifth time, the duties of editor of our class paper.

Editorial work is often of an arduous and laborious character, and for that very reason is also very instructive and useful. We shall have to look, we think for the reward of what labor we have expended on this issue, rather to the profit thus derived, than to any great pleasure to be experienced in reading it to you this evening. For we must admit that we, present it with some misgivings, know that neither we ourselves, nor our assistant, have given the support to this number which should have been granted it. To such failures as the present one on our own part, as well as to some of a like character on the part of other members of the Phi Sigma, one of the editorials which follow, probably owes its existence. However we trust this number will not be entirely devoid of interest, but will derive some merit from the articles which have been kindly con-



one by our corresponding member Mr. F. E. Whitman, and one by an anonymous writer. To these persons we return our humble and grateful thanks. They have helped us in a time of need and their aid is correspondingly appreciated. —

We ~~has~~ hope the two gentlemen, whose names were favorably passed upon last meeting, will sign the constitution this evening, and become active members of our organization. With three or four more names attached to our constitution by the first of the year, we will be in good condition to do some profitable work next term.

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One of the things it is needful for us to learn in life, if we would be happy, is to bear with equanimity the disappointments that come to us. This is not always an easy thing to do. But perhaps we will in time, by combating with mind and heart their frequent visitations, become less subject to their baneful influences and dispiriting influences. To night we must acknowledge ourselves indebted



to him, who was appointed to assist us on this paper, for our more lesson is this hard school of experience. We expected an article from him, but we have it not. Perhaps we may be able to bear the next disappointment ~~that~~ that befalls us, better, ~~better~~ by reason of this one, but however that may be, we think we would have preferred the article.

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What has become of our extemporaneous speeches and debates, such as we had last term? Probably you will answer that we have not had time for them lately. Granting that such has been the case, we must not permit them to be so crowded out in the future. - We expected that this term, they would form a prominent part of our exercises and that we would derive much benefit from them; and indeed we need practice in this branch. Let us see to it that hereafter we come together promptly at 7.45, and that during the two hours and a half that follow, we have at least one extemporaneous speech and debate; and



more if there is time.

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Next meeting occurs  
our semi-annual election of officers.  
The "Voice" we believe has never been very  
much of an electioneering organ, support-  
ing certain members for office and  
running down others: nor does it in-  
tend to assume any such position now -  
it will merely repeat now what it has  
said ~~of~~ before - viz: that all it desires  
is that the subject shall receive the care-  
ful and thoughtful consideration of  
each and all; and that the result  
will be the choice of persons, who will  
ever keep the best interests of the society  
in mind, and will endeavor to make  
the next term a successful one, and  
one which at the end may be look-  
ed back to with satisfaction and  
pleasure.

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as stated above we  
have the pleasure of reaching this even-  
ing a contribution from our fellow-  
member Mr. F. E. Whitman. You will  
all probably be glad to hear from him  
and also to know, that if all goes  
well, he will be present with us



at our next meeting.

We were sorry that the first negative on the debate last meeting, did not have time to prepare any arguments in support of his side of the question. His failure to speak detracted greatly from the interest centering in the discussion. However we are glad that he was able to give a good excuse for not taking part, and hope that next time there is one a debate he may be able to do himself more justice.

You will observe that our anonymous contributor of this issue, treats in his paper of the subject which we discussed at our last session. We thank him for his contribution. and although we cannot consistently indorse his statements, having but recently upheld the opposite side of the question, we yet take pleasure in opening the columns of the "Voix" to a full and free discussion of <sup>this</sup> subject of international copyright.



Many of the members of the Phi Sigma must have noted with deep interest, the position Secy. Plaine has taken with reference to the Panama Canal Question. It having been reported that an attempt was being made or about to be made to have some of the European powers unite in guaranteeing the neutrality of said canal when completed. Mr. Plaine has written to our minister at the court of St. James, and at the capitals upon the continent, instructing them when any such action shall be taken by those ~~for~~ powers, to in a friendly way inform them <sup>that</sup> the United States have already by a treaty made some years ago, promised the government of the United States of Columbia, that their possessions in Panama shall be protected, and the neutrality of the canal observed. and to say furthermore that any action on the part of any European nation, looking to a supplementing of, or interference with the position which the U. S. have assumed by right of this treaty, will be regarded as unfriendly and unwarranted by the latter power. - We need only add that Mr. Plaine's ~~last~~ action has been favorably commented upon by most of the papers throughout the country.



Hugh Miller, just previous to the commencement of his apprenticeship as a stone mason, was editor and principal contributor to a small magazine, which he and some of his boy friends wrote, styled the "Villings Observer". In one of the numbers appears the following note from his hand: "Wrote a moral essay upon the advantages of industry but tore it in pieces on considering that its author was one of the most indolent personages on earth - did nothing, but still determined on reform."

Were we as jealous in avoiding all appearance of inconsistency this Editorial would have to share a like fate, or rather, might never have been written at all. But we offer it remembering that its suggestions apply as much to ourselves as to others, and knowing that our many failures, while attempting to carry out some of its ideas in the past, have served but to show us the more, the necessity for improving in the future.

Now having admitted that we have not always practiced what we herein preach, we would call



your attention to our text:— "What-  
soever ~~a~~ thy hand findeth to do, do it  
with thy might. Two great changes  
marked the passage of this class from  
its third to its fourth year: viz- its meet-  
ings instead of being held once a week,  
now occur but once a month; and  
its members<sup>ship</sup> instead of being ten  
or twelve, is but about half that number.  
It might fairly have been expected  
that either one of these changes, had  
it come alone, would have had a  
detrimental effect, upon the welfare  
of the society, and upon the interest  
manifested in its sessions. And  
coming together as they did, they threatened  
the very existence of the class. But  
the Phi Sigma still lives; a proof of its  
own preciousness, of the place it holds  
in the affections of its members.

May:

Its past, abide in our memory, dear;  
Its present, be to our hearts, most near;  
Its future continue our hopes to cheer.

And yet although we can say that the  
class survives, we must admit that its  
forces have been considerably weakened,  
and must perceive that it will require



energetic labor on the part of each of us to restore and maintain it, in the fulness of its former glory and usefulness. And it is here in relation to our class duties particularly that we would have you apply the words we have cited.

It has sometimes occurred to us, as perhaps it has to you, not only as regards our class work, but also in connection with our other labors, what failures we often make, or what but partial successes we attain, just because we do not devote ourselves to our work with all the energy and zeal of which we are capable. We only half work, and consequently fall short of accomplishing the greatest possible results. How much better work we could do if we would only train ourselves to diligent and persevering labor. What interesting and instructive meetings of the society we might have, - such as we have not I fear enjoyed thus far this term, - if we would strive, when appointed for any exercise, to fulfill it to the best of our ability. We know that is all the class expects. We fear that it is more than it often gets. Do you doubt but that



we would have good meetings, and that much benefit would be derived therefrom, if we always came so prepared. No! Everyone would take pleasure in them, and we might individually derive as much if not more benefit than we would if the class were much larger. For it is by participating in the exercises ourselves that we derive the most good, and in the present condition of the class each person is called upon to give an exercise every meeting, or at least every other meeting, and so may expect to derive more practice in declaiming and writing, in proportion to the time spent in the society, than if he belonged to a larger one which met oftener, but where he would be called upon but every fourth or fifth meeting.

And surely once a month or once in two months is not so often to give a prepared exercise. That is but from five to ten times in the year. We could not expect to <sup>improve</sup> so much if we did less than that.

Indeed in one branch of our work we think the members need not always wait to be appointed, but may



very fittingly lend some volunteer assistance. And that branch is the class paper. Formerly it was issued every two weeks, and the members were appointed to write for it quite frequently. But now as it appears but once in two months you can readily see that as only an editor and one assistant are appointed each time, any member will be called upon to contribute but twice during the year. Now wouldn't it be better if instead of always waiting till we were called to assist on the "Voice" we should try the plan of writing something for each number, that would be but once in eight weeks. We would not need to write a heavy or closely studied article everytime; I mean studied as far as the matter & materials were concerned, but we might vary them with ones of a lighter or more spontaneous character, but which would yet be interesting and instructive, and would afford us practice in the correct use of good language.

We have not dwelt very much upon the exact words of our text - "Whosoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might". But we trust we



we have made it clear, where we would have them applied. Our desire is to have all our exercises better prepared, our paper better supported, and our meetings, as a whole, made more interesting and benefiting and instructive. Can the class not accomplish these objects? Will it not accomplish them?

-Editor-



## An International Copyright.

A new question has recently risen on the horizon of discussion—one fraught with considerable interest to the vast army of readers throughout our land, yet which, we fear, will not receive from them the consideration it merits. The American patent system originated with the birth of our Government, and was incorporated into the Constitution by its Framers. At that time everything was in a raw and crude condition—art, invention, business, finance and literature could but feebly perform their functions—a stimulus must be given to their exertions and means devised for the promotion of their activity. Hence there was established a clause in the Constitution that Congress should pass laws "to secure for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries". This was a wise and just provision and by it was the progress of science and useful arts much enhanced—the telegraph telephone printing press and all the multitudinous products of invention were its natural outcomes. True there would have dawned without the aid of law yet the protection granted hastened their discovery. Now however this question must be viewed in another light. Our country & its factors of success



invention the arts & literature have outgrown their feebleness & by a natural sequence are accumulating power. These factors are so potent as to no longer require protection and unless they are checked by competition, their power has full sway either for good or for evil. Now whereas one would expect the question of to-day to be the discontinuance of our copyright law yet we hear instead a demand for further franchise and the passage of acts that will extend their power track across ~~land~~ the seas.

The advocates of an international copyright contend, & they place great stress on this point, that it is but right and just to extend to authors all privileges possible and that a copyright bound but by the antipodes is necessary to their happiness. To this we reply that the United States legislates ~~only~~ for its citizens and so long as it protects them within its borders, they can reasonably ask no more. The english publishers beg the U.S. Govt to grant them exclusive rights within its Dominion. Is this just or fair to the American people? What if this courtesy will obtain from British power the same privileges for american publishers. It will not then be just and fair, as american readers of English works greatly outnumber foreign readers of our own. An international



copyright may be advantageous to England but it is not so to us. Foreign works command exorbitant prices—so much so that only the rich and large libraries can afford their purchase. Surely it is not to our interest to endure such extortion and we say,—encourage all possible competition; let books be scattered broadcast for by them alone can the people's intelligence be raised.

We allow that authors & publishers possess some rights but, we claim, they already receive them. An edition of 1,000 copies usually pays all expenses of a book's preparation—after that it is largely profit. Any work of merit published in a respectable shape will be self supporting, in spite of all competition. Piratical editions, as they are called, do not infringe upon the sale of more elaborate ones,—that is to a great extent,—for they circulate in another field and have a separate existence of their own; they enter the homes of the workmen, the hovels of the poor, and the rooms of the toiling shop girls, there to displace pernicious literature by their wholesome influence.

Another point affirmed in favor of an international copyright is that it fosters the growth of an American literature.—that as literature survived the power & government



of Greece and Rome, we should therefore pay the utmost attention to our own. This is very true and it ought to be our duty to make American literature of as lofty a character <sup>as</sup> possible. ~~Will a world wide copyright do that?~~ We know of no better encouragement of a national literature than to put in operation the evolution theory "The survival of the fittest" is the thing necessary. American authors ought to be able to compete with their cousins across the water on equal terms. If not, their productions are unworthy to go in history as American literature. If the conditions of our climate are unable to produce as worthy writers as Europe can produce then let us discard our pretensions, acknowledge their superiority, and devote the remainder of our days to European thought. Never feed our minds on local protected food! Rather let us go down to posterity as a nation that drew inspiration from a borrowed literature than leave behind us one of inferior merit.

England to-day is on the eve of a literary revolution. She has awaked to the idea that there is a demand for cheaper books. It has been slow to penetrate the thick cranium of the Briton but having once ~~en~~



found an ingress it is stirring that lethargic individual to action or reform. A short time since a leading authoress began the new departure by issuing a very cheap edition of her novels which sold at a most rapid rate. The publishers labored hard to dissuade her from such a step but to no purpose. They now view the result of her venture in consternation. Some of them are about to issue cheaper editions of their works and ere long we may expect to see the rest falling in line. Then the agitation of an international copyright will probably cease for only the high priced costly edition publishers are its supporters. The extensive publishers in this land never moved this question so long as they enjoyed a monopoly of foreign reprints. When the Seaside & Book Exchange firms began operations, then they opened their batteries, revealing a purpose to silence the public's friend and crush competition.



## Wit and Wisdom

"An exchange wants to know the origin of the Hessian fly. If we mistake not, it was General Washington who first made the Hessian fly in this country."

---

"He who loves to read, and knows how to reflect, has laid by a perpetual feast for his old age."

---

"There are said to be four hundred cedars left in Lebanon, — How many were there and where are the ~~se~~ cedars?"

---

Every man makes his own reputation; The world only puts on the stamp.

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Would you see our Gerald's dearie?

Then you must seek Wood and Exie.

---

It requires wisdom to be able, and it requires honesty to be willing, to call things by their right names.



Two friends, who were divided in opinion as to the relative merits of a certain well-known man, were recently discussing his qualities, when one of them said, evidently thinking it a clincher!

"Well, at any rate, he knows what he's talking about!"

"Undoubtedly," replied the other, "he ought to, for he's generally talking about himself."

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A man cannot do good nor evil to others without doing good or evil to himself.

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"Go west - young man - go west" - Horace Greeley.

"I always do, when I go to see my girl" W. H. Beard.

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One reason why we all grow wise so slowly, is because we nurse our mistakes too fondly.

---

'Tis sweet to wait, but O! how bitter!

To wait for a gal, and then not git her.

F. H. Potts.

(He too) Wm. Hulin.



# Amherst Letter

(1.)

Dear Phi Siquites:—

In contributing something to help fill the pages of the forthcoming number of The Voice I shall not attempt to furnish anything that can be considered to possess literary merit but shall endeavor to impart to those in the western metropolis some of the experiences right and thro't that have been ours during the past two months. Furthermore I fear the following contribution will consist chiefly of disconnected fragments jotted down at various times. Do not think from this statement that it is owing to any inclination of ours that the letter is to be so composed but rather understand that in Amherst just the same as in Chicago there are things which even a Phi Siquite cannot control. I do not wish to enter the plea of "no time" for it would savor of falsehood. Indeed we have twenty four hours <sup>in each day</sup> here, the majority of which however are consumed in sleeping, eating, studying and reciting.

That you may understand more fully just how the hours are employed it may be well to map out, as it were, our work in and out of the college.



At ~~just~~ six o'clock every week-day morn-  
ing the bell in tower of the College Chapel  
rings - probably for the purpose of waking  
the sleeping students - How well it succeeds  
we do not feel able to state. But finally  
there come some peals from the same old  
bell that carry considerable emphasis. It is  
then seven o'clock & the next half hour fol-  
lowing is employed in making hasty toilets  
& hurrying to breakfast which occurs at half  
past seven. This last named hour however does  
not find many hungry young Americans at  
the table & it is generally ten minutes later  
when the bell again rings that breakfast  
is begun in earnest - (Your correspondent, by-  
the-way, was on hand at the proper time this  
morning.) At eleven minutes of eight the  
bell begins to toll & after varying its pace  
several times stops ringing at last with  
a few quick double strokes at just 5  
minutes of eight - Fifteen minutes are then  
occupied in "Prayers" after which the  
Freshman class repairs to the gymnasium,  
or "Gym" as 'tis called, and goes through  
with a prescribed dumbbell exercise. This  
occupies about a half hour which is  
very profitably employed. Soon after the



"Gym" the bell rings for our first recitation which is devoted to Latin - occupying one hour & dismissing us at 10 minutes after ten. The next recitation - one in Greek occurs at half past eleven. By the time the Greek recitation is over it is time for dinner which Freshmen generally do justice to - at least we speak from our own experience. We have no other recitation until one in Mathematics at 4.30 at the close of which is a half hour before supper generally spent in the reading room where are Chicago, St Louis, New Orleans, New York, Boston & Springfield papers on file.

After supper the Post Office is visited - how often in vain as far as the Phi Sigmas are concerned! - and then the evening is before us for study or reading. This order just given in a manner hard to understand we fear is followed out on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays; Wednesday & Saturday being varied by means of omission of recitations or the substitution of lectures. There is no exercise whatever on Wednesday & Saturday afternoons. Now having heard the "order of exercises", by remembering that this year is considered as hard as any in college you will perhaps understand



why it is rather difficult to stop long enough to finish an article at one writing. There are always enough things connected with the exercises of the other days to occupy the two spare afternoons.

Having now rather prematurely told you of the "routine" here I will begin where I should have begun had I written this in a more methodical & more proper way.

Our trip east on the fast train over the Pittsburgh & Ft. Wayne & Penn. Central Railroads was a remarkably pleasant one being quite free from dust & all other unpleasant features of a journey & besides made <sup>more</sup> enjoyable by pleasant company & beautiful scenery. New York was reached nearly on time & we sought at once the New Haven boat. Boarding this steamer ~~we~~ soon found a comfortable berth in which to rest ourselves until morning. The rattling of the rudder chains & other disturbing elements attendant upon landing wakened us at five o'clock next morning in the "City of Eleus".

After a few days very pleasantly spent here your correspondent turned his face northward towards this seat of learning & homely maidens — where he



(5)

expects to spend the next four years of his existence.

Many years ago there was a day which tradition has handed down to us as being a very dark one in New England but this day on which we reached Amherst was one which has established the name of being a darker day. The grass appeared of a peculiar bright green, almost blue color; the earth looked strange, the sky was most unusually covered with clouds; lights were kept burning during all the middle of the day, the chickens went to roost. Had some of the old poets been alive then they would probably have written about the "heavens weeping" for it was on that day that the sick President was carried to Elberon from which he was never to return alive.



On Thursday, the 8th day of Sept. at 5 minutes of 8 o'clock the college gathered, to begin the year, in the Chapel. I shall never forget, I fancy, the feeling that came over me when as the entire body of young men arose, I realized that I was just entering on a college course of 4 years, the end or result of which no one can foretell. Altho' recitations usually begin right away, that



day was an exception for the President announced that, since the day had been set apart by Gov. Long of Mass. & by the Governors of many other states as a day of prayer for the recovery of the President of the Nation, there would be no exercises. Then later we gathered in a large lecture room & one could not help thinking as the prayers of Professor after Professor went up to the throne of Grace that if anything ~~could~~ secure recovery, that certainly would. But even prayer could not save one we loved so much for just as we were beginning the latin recitation a few days later news came that he was dead. The bells began solemnly to toll, the recitations were hurriedly & quietly heard <sup>classes</sup> & quickly dismissed, crepe appeared in window and on house, gloom was depicted on every face, sadness was in every heart. A week later memorial addresses ended the sad story and college life went on as before.

Now having told you how we reached Amherst & what happened soon after our arrival you may be glad to hear about how the boys fare for societies both secret & open. Societies differ a good deal here from those at Yale & Harvard



in that at Harvard there are now fraternities — unless perhaps one or two <sup>have</sup> been moved this year — and at Yale the fraternities are class societies — By "class societies" is meant societies which a man may belong to only while a member of a certain class. In Amherst however all the secret societies except one are fraternities i.e. they have chapters in different colleges. The fraternities having chapters here are the 'Alpha Delta Phi', <sup>2</sup> Psi Upsilon, <sup>3</sup> Chi Psi, <sup>4</sup> Delta Kappa Epsilon, <sup>5</sup> Chi Phi & <sup>6</sup> Delta Upsilon — The letters & nicknames for these are as follows in order — 1. A. Δ. Φ. Alpha Delt — 2. Ψ. U. Psi U, <sup>3</sup> Χ. Ψ. Chi Psi. & Δ. K. E. Deek 5 Χ. Φ. Kiffie 6 Δ. U. D. U. There is also another local secret society called Torch & Crown which was organized four years ago by Mr. Cornick & Thichliffe of Chicago & others who could not get into any other society. Each society man wears a pin which varies in price according to size workmanship & jewels in them. When next you see your Senior Amherst member you will see on his breast a jewelled  Chi Phi and if fair fortune favors your humble servant with filthy lucre he will sport a  Chi Psi



Further than this between us & thee there hangs a heavy veil.

There are two open societies Athenae & Alexandria which hold weekly (& weekly) meetings. There is no great interest in them and no way to compel one to fulfil an appointment. The expenses are three dollars per year. Tho' these societies seem to drag almost lifelessly along their membership rolls have been graced by some celebrated names for within their halls such men as Bishop Huntington, R.S. Storrs & Henry Ward Beecher have declaimed and debated when students here.

This article is getting long & tedious too ere this I fear & so I will not try to prolong it more. About many things connected with college & society life, sports, studies, progs & tutors buildings & Amherst beauties — animated & inanimate — I shall have to tell you at some future time. There is a bare possibility that the witer may be with you in a month from now & if so, be ready to answer questions & inquiries from the members of the Class. As I listen I hear young brains cracking over the most geometry ever written & mine must crack too —

"I declare the meeting adjourned"

F.E. W.